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WHEN I PASS THROUGH DARK VALLEYS

“The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Psalm 23:1-4

### Paul and The Valley

“From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. “And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.

Acts 20:17-24 (NTE)

### Three Truths About Our Dark Valley...

1. The Valley Is \_\_\_\_\_ A \_\_\_\_\_ Of \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:1, Job 5:17

2. \_\_\_\_\_ My Valley \_\_\_\_\_ Doesn't Mean \_\_\_\_\_ It \_\_\_\_\_

John 11:35, 2 Corinthians 1:8, 1 Thessalonians 4:13

3. \_\_\_\_\_ Is Not In The \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Is In My \_\_\_\_\_ to  
God In The \_\_\_\_\_.

### Why Should I Trust God In The Valley?

1. God \_\_\_\_\_ My \_\_\_\_\_

2. God is \_\_\_\_\_ And \_\_\_\_\_

3. The \_\_\_\_\_ is Just Part Of The \_\_\_\_\_ The \_\_\_\_\_ Is  
Taking To \_\_\_\_\_ Me \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement: Some of the material used in preparation for this message has been adapted from content presented by Chris Brown, Willie James Jennings, Tim Keller, Martin Luther, Larry Osborne, Felming Rutledge, A.W. Tozer, and many others

### MY NEXT STEP TODAY IS TO . . .

- Memorize Psalm 23
- Ask Jesus Christ to be my Lord, Savior and Shepherd for the 1st time
- Trust that the Good Shepherd is with me and leading me through my dark valley
- Pray that God uses my dark valley for His glory
- Get the most out of this weekend’s teaching by participating in my Life Group this week.



## Discussion Questions - Week #6

# LIFEGROUPS

### QUICK REVIEW

Thinking back to the sermon this weekend, "Living in the Goodness of God When I pass Through Dark Valleys," summarize the main point in a sentence or two.

Looking at your notes, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Is there any practical step you plan on taking this week in response to the message?

### GETTING STARTED

► Sometimes short-term pain can bring about long-term joy and peace. Have you ever felt like the pain you went through was worth it because of the end result?

► The responses people have when they face challenges, uncertainty, and suffering can vary greatly. What are some ways you've noticed the people around you respond to difficult circumstances?

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. Read Job 1:1-22 & 2:7-10. What stands out to you most in this passage?

What difference does Job's faith in God make in the way he deals with his catastrophic losses?

How has your faith helped sustain you in the face of loss?

Do you think it's possible for someone today to endure all that Job did and still respond with such faith?

While hopefully none of us face the kinds of losses that Job faced, we all will face adversity at some time or other. What kinds of things can we do to prepare ourselves for the inevitable adversity?

2. The letter of 1 Peter was written at a time when Christians were actively and intensely persecuted. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What words does Peter use to describe the persecution they were facing?

On what grounds should facing persecution be a source for rejoicing?

Peter reminds the church to expect to suffer for the cause of Christ. How is this attitude different from the perspective that most American Christians have towards suffering and trials because of their faith in Christ?

What do you think is the reason that Christians living in America face so little persecution?

Is there any area in your life where you are hiding your faith for fear of what others might think?

What can you do to stand firm in the weeks to come, presenting the gospel in word and deed?

### TAKING IT HOME

☞ What is one truth from the message this weekend that you need to keep before you this week?

☞ What hardships are causing you to want to give up right now? How can the group be praying for you to cling to God and endure?

### PRAYER REQUESTS